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couraged in their studies, either by the private correspondence or published works of the Smithsonian Institution. How many young naturalists, and we speak from personal experience, scattered over the country, away from libraries and the stimulus of scientific intercourse, owe to this Institution, founded by the bequest of James Smithson, of England, "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men," a great part of their success in investigating natural phenomena!

No institution known to us, in any land, has by such a wise and economical management of its funds, done so much for the advancement of all departments of science. This has been accomplished by the wide and generous distribution of its numerous publications, the use of its large and unique library of scientific periodicals, its duplicates from the Museum of Natural History, and its loan, necessarily guarded, of meteorological instruments, together with its ready aid to those conducting original investigations, and by its general sympathy with the highest scientific culture.

The present volume, printed and distributed as a Congressional document, contains beside the annual statement of the accounts and doings of the Institution, articles of general interest. Among such are the eulogies on General Joseph G. Totten, the conchologist and eminent military engineer, and on Ducrotay de Blainville, the student, unsuccessful rival, and finally the successor of Cuvier in the Jardin des Plantes. There is also an account of the Aurora Borealis or Polar Light, by Professor Elias Loomis; an article on the Senses, translated from the German periodical *Aus der Natur*; lectures on Electro-Physiology, by Professor Carl Matteucci, of Turin, and a very full account by Professor E. Desor, of the "Palafittes, or Lacustrine Constructions on the Lake of Neuchatel," an article of great interest at present owing to the discussions on the antiquity of Man. Throughout the text are distributed numerous cuts illustrating the implements of the age of Stone, of Bronze and of Iron. The report of this able and cautious investigator brings out clearly the fact "that it was the same people who inhabited our soil [Switzerland] during the ages of Stone, and of Bronze, and up to the time of the invasion by the Helvetians."

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF CONCHOLOGY. Edited by G. W. Tryon, jr., Philadelphia. Published quarterly at \$10 per year.

The second volume of this Journal, illustrated by twenty-seven colored and plain plates, is completed. It contains many valuable articles by the leading Conchologists of this country, and will be found useful to all studying the Mollusca.